

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. (Currently amended) Method for producing a starch mixture of grainy to powdery materials containing starch, comprising mixing in an extruder a first component[[,]] containing at least one starch, ~~being mixed in an extruder~~ with a second component containing at least water, ~~characterized in that~~

- (a) providing that the total water content of the mixture, containing the first component and the second component, is less than 40% by weight ~~and, in particular, ranges from 15% to 20%,~~
- (b) maintaining the temperature during the mixing and cooking processes in the extruder is between 120° and 250°C ~~and preferably ranges from 160° to 220°C,~~
- (c) drying the extrudate[[,]] obtained in the extruder, ~~is dried~~ and

- (d) grinding and screening the dried extrudate ~~is ground and screened.~~

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the maximum screen size during screening is about 4 mm and, ~~in particular, ranges from 1 mm to 3 mm.~~

3. (Currently amended) The method of ~~claims 1 or 2, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the initial water content of the first component is about 10 to 15% by weight and ~~that additional~~ further comprising adding water ~~is added~~ to the extruder during the mixing process.

4. (Currently amended) The method of ~~one of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that~~ claim 1, further comprising adding acid and/or alkali ~~is added~~ during the mixing to the mixture containing starch and water.

5. (Currently amended) The method of ~~one of the claims 1 to 4, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the component, containing the starch, is flour and, ~~in particular, rye flour.~~

6. (Currently amended) The method of ~~one of the claims 1 to 5,~~
~~characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the component, containing the starch, is
conventional, commercial rye flour with an initial water content of about 10 to 15%
by weight.

7. (Currently amended) The method of ~~one of the claims 1 to 6,~~
~~characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the mixing process takes place in a twin-
screw extruder, rotating in the same direction at 200 to 1200 rpm.

8. (Currently amended) The method of ~~one of the preceding claims,~~
~~characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the specific mechanical energy introduced
into the product is about 120 to 220 Wh/kg.

9. (Currently amended) The starch-containing, grainy to powdery
mixture of materials, ~~which was produced by the method of one of the claims 1 to~~
~~8~~ claim 1.

10. (Currently amended) ~~The use of~~ A method for producing a binder
comprising stirring the starch-containing mixture of materials of claim 9 ~~as a~~

~~binder, characterized in that the starch-containing mixture of materials is stirred into water for this purpose.~~

11. (Currently amended) ~~The use of~~ The method according to claim 10,
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is stirred
into water having a temperature of 20° to 70°C ~~and preferably of 30° to 60°C.~~

12. (Currently amended) ~~The use of claims 10 or 11, characterized in~~
~~that~~ The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of
materials is used as a binder for cellulose fibers, ~~especially for producing paper or~~
~~cardboard.~~

13. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the total water content of the
mixture, containing the first component and the second component, ranges from
15% to 20%.

14. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the temperature during the
mixing and cooking process in the extruder ranges from 160° to 220°C.

15. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the maximum screen size during screening ranges from about 1 mm to 3mm.

16. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising adding alkali during the mixing to the mixture containing starch and water.

17. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising adding acid and alkali during the mixing to the mixture containing starch and water.

18. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the component, containing the starch, is rye flour.

19. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is stirred into water having a temperature of 30° to 60°C.

20. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein the starch-containing mixture of materials is used as a binder for producing paper or cardboard.

21. (New) A binder comprising the starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials produced by the method of claim 1, and water with which said starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials has been stirred.

22. (New) A binder for cellulose fibers comprising the starch-containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials produced by the method of claim 1, and water with which said starch containing, grainy to powdery mixture of materials has been stirred.